

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel Hubbard Bell, April 19, 1917

Beinn Bhreagh, near Baddeck, Nova Scotia. 1917 April 19 Mrs Alexander Graham Bell
1331 Connecticut Avenue Washington D C Dear Mabel:—

Note of April 15th received. Have just returned from the Sheep shed where I have been examining the Lambs born this year. Out of a total of thirty one lambs twenty seven were produced in good condition. Four died or were killed before I got here. I went rapidly through the flock putting out side lambs that you would certainly not like to keep. This left seventeen lambs that were either acceptable or doubtful. We gave each lamb(of the seventeen) an ear mark and stopped proceedings for the day. The lambs that have ear marks are to be collected tomorrow and kept for two or three hours separate from their mother so that by the time I get up to the Sheep Barn they will all be ready to identify their mothers.

Casey and I are now ready to discuss Hydrosurface Experiments. In the meantime I am giving some thought to the utilization of waste heat by the men at the front. I have now obtained some asbestos paper to make tea coseys with which I can experiment by myself.

I don't think it will be necessary to provide fire proof material. A large bag of waterproof material, or even of canvas if hung up upside down with a whoop or some thing at the bottom to keep it suspended extended might be of some use in drying and warming socks and underthings. The hot air from a candle — lantern or other illuminant placed under the open mouth of the bag would probably be sufficient to keep anything inside the bag dry and warm. A sort of flexible portable closet for drying clothing and keeping things warm. Quite apart from the value of any such apparatus for heating water its use in providing dry warm clothing might be of great importance to comfort and health.

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Will get a canvas bag and a whoop to keep it open, and see what we can do with a candle-lantern underneath. I can do a little experimenting upon this by myself at night. We can be certain of this that whatever results are obtained with a candle-lantern, better results would come from the use of stronger heating arrangements.

My idea was to utilize the waste heat given off by any of the illuminants employed in the trenches /but I am a little doubtful whether any are used excepting in dug-outs. No harm however, to ascertain whether any useful heating effects can be obtained with an ordinary candle.

A G B